

Milwaukee Veterans Administration Medical Center,
Building 47 (Milwaukee Veterans Administration
Medical Center, Single Family Dwelling)
5000 West National Avenue
Milwaukee
Milwaukee County
Wisconsin

HABS No. WI-303-B

*HABS
WI-3
40-MILWA,
42-B-*

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

MILWAUKEE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION MEDICAL CENTER, BUILDING 47
(Milwaukee Veterans Administration Medical Center, Single Family Dwelling)

HABS No. WI-303-B

HABS
WIS,
40-MILWA,
42-B-

LOCATION: Veterans Administration Medical Center
5000 W. National Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53295

PRESENT OWNER: Veterans Administration Medical Center

PRESENT OCCUPANT: Vacant

PRESENT USE: Vacant - Demolition anticipated in 1986

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: Building 47 is a two story rectangular white clapboard house with an attic and full basement. This residence as well as all the residences in the Historic District were for the Northwest Branch National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers indicative of a complete self-contained community. In addition, they are an example of the life style of the top staff at that time.

Military concept of staff housing was reflected in this quarters. The size of the quarters building, that of a multiple bedroom structure demonstrates a family size dwelling.

Accordingly, they are an example of residential rather than institutional construction.

The building had been used as a residence for its duration for government employees until June 15, 1978. It was originally used for the Treasurer's Quarters. It was later used for the Chief Medical Officer in 1935.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Date of Erection: 1899

Architect: Unknown

Original and Subsequent Owners: Northwest Branch National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers - Original owners which became the Veterans Administration in 1930.

Builders, Contractors, Suppliers: Unknown

Original Plans & Construction: Original plans not available. Plans drawn 7/26/35 by Matzke.

Alterations & Additions: General maintenance and repair. Upgrading utilities.

Historical Narrative:

Building 47 was constructed in 1899 as a residence single family dwelling for employees of the Northwest Branch National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers and later the Veterans Administration. A lease was adopted for each resident and rent collected in later years. The building was used for a wide variety of tenants.

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: The building represents a Simplified Victorian style construction. The original windows were embraced by shutters. These were removed in later years. Screened-in porches were added in later years.
2. Condition of Fabric: Poor (to be demolished). Wood is deteriorating; the foundation is beginning to crumble.

3. Summary Description: Building 47, built in 1899, is a two story rectangular white clapboard house. It has an attic and a basement. Several projections extend from the house; at the left, a one story screen porch with a flat roof; at the right is a small one story side-door entry with a shed roof; in the front is a rectangular screened porch with an extra wing section used for entry. The front porch is one story and topped with a balustraded deck. Covering the foundation is a lattic panel. Along the right side of the porch are eight wood steps up to the porch door which is in the small wing section of the porch. The main house entry is beyond.

The house has a diamond patterned slate tile gabled roof. A tall, square, interior brick chimney extends high above the roof near the front.

Assorted sized windows scattered on the four facades are primarily two over two sash windows.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Foundation: Reinforced concrete.
2. Wall Construction: The exterior walls are wood frame with horizontal clapboard wood siding.
3. Structural Systems: Reinforced concrete foundation with wood joists floor structural support and 2 x 4 framing.
4. Porches, Stoops, etc.: Screened front porch and one story side entry with shed roof. Side screened porch at left. There is a railing on top of the front porch.
5. Openings, Doorways and Windows: Double hung windows throughout. Front doors contain a large panel of glass. The rear door is wood and glass.
6. Roof, Shape and Covering: The roof is a gabled roof of diamond patterned slate tile. It is in poor condition.

C. Detailed Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans: The front entrance enters directly into the dining room, a 12' - 0" x 13' - 10" room. An arched opening to the sitting room and hence to the reception room. An entryway also is on the south side of the reception room. The stairwell to the 2nd floor leads from the reception room. The living room is on the west end of the house adjacent to the reception room. The fireplace is made of brick and marble interior with wood trim. The kitchen is located on the north end of the building with a pantry and entry vestibule to the outside. Cupboards in the kitchen are painted pine and fir. The 2nd floor contains 3 bedrooms with the master bedroom having a separate dressing room. There is also a serving room with bay double hung windows and study. 1½ bathrooms are located on the 2nd floor. The basement contains mechanical, electrical and plumbing space. The building is heated with steam. The entire interior is plaster finish including the ceilings.
2. Stairways: The main stairwell leads from the 1st to the 2nd floor and a wood stairwell to the basement. The stairs are pine and fir stained walnut.
3. Flooring: All flooring is maple 1" x 3" tongue and grove flooring varnished and stained maple.
4. Wall and Ceiling Finish: All ceilings and walls are plasterboard. Ceiling heights vary from 8' - 0" to 11' - 3".
5. Doorways, Doors, Windows: All doors are pine and fir painted white or stained walnut. Windows are wood painted white double hung with 1" x 6" trim molding with routed edges.
6. Interior Trim: Ceiling molding is 1" x 3" pine painted white. Baseboards are routed 1" x 6" with 1" x 1/2" cover molding.
7. Hardware: Brass pin mortise locks throughout.
8. Mechanical and Electrical Equipment: The building used steam heat through radiators in each room below the windows. It contains electric lighting. The fixtures are not original.
9. Fireplaces: The fireplace has marble interior and brick with decorative wood trim of that era.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

1. Orientation and General Setting: The building faces east and is situated on a knoll in the 242 acre VA Medical Center. The area contains primarily oak, elm and maple trees and is situated east of the incinerator Bldg. 119 and Laundry Bldg. 102. The Powerhouse, Bldg. 112 is north of Bldg. 47. Bldg. 43, the old Hospital Annex, is northeast of Bldg. 47. This building makes up a part of the Historic District. The above referenced buildings were added subsequent to Bldg. 47.

SOURCES OF PROJECT INFORMATION

Architectural plans and actual field measurements. The historical record was obtained from the National Register of Historic Places Nomination form (Eligible on 1-9-80) which was developed by the Historic Preservation Officer, VA Central Office, Office of Construction. The recordation conforms with the standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey, U.S. Dept. of the Interior.

Bibliography

Architect and Engineer: Unknown

VA Title Files

National Register Nomination

Engineering Service, VA Medical Center, Milwaukee, WI - Documents

Annual Reports of the Board of Managers - National Home Disabled Volunteer Soldiers
(1866 - 1930)

Proceedings of the Board of Managers (1866 - 1930)

Scrapbooks

Photofiles - Dated & Nondated

Case Histories - Dated & Nondated

Prepared by: Thomas A. Heydel
Chief Engineer
VA Medical Center
Milwaukee, WI 53295
July 30, 1986

